

Cannon-Davis House
Highway 7 South
Wibaux
Wibaux County
Montana

HABS No. MT-77

HABS
MONT,
SS-WIBA,
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225

CANNON-DAVIS HOUSE

HABS No. MT-77

Location: Assessor's Block 12,
Lots 3, 4, and S 1/2 of Lot 2, amended plat
Wibaux

Present Owner: Norbert Job
P.O. Box 353
Wibaux, Montana 59252

Present Occupant: Vacant

Present Use: Vacant

HABS
MONT,
55-WIBA,
1-

Statement of
Significance:

The Cannon-Davis House is historically significant because of association with Frank Cannon and Allison Davis, two locally prominent businessmen in Wibaux, Montana.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Date of Erection: 1894-1900

Architect: Unknown. This workingman's cottage style is common to Sears, Roebuck, and Company, Alladin, Montgomery Wards, and other mail-order home manufacturers of the turn of the century.

Original and Subsequent Owners:

Morris Nolan filed a homestead on the land on 19 June 1890. Frank Cannon and W.A. Orgain purchased the land on 2 February 1894 for one hundred and fifty dollars. Allison Davis purchased the land from Frank and Mary Cannon on 30 August 1900 for eight hundred dollars. Marjorie and Esther Davis obtained the property from the Allison Davis estate in 1915. Jacob W. Meyers purchased Marjorie Elliot's share of the property on 10 October 1944 with a quit claim deed. He purchased Esther Rachel Zammiller's share on 27 November 1944 with another quit claim deed. Ed Meyers obtained the property from the estate of his father in 1976. Meyers sold the property to Sarah F. and Floyd Keneipp on 10 March 1976 with a special warranty deed. Floyd Keneipp and Hortense Keys then obtained a warranty deed on the land on 20 June 1977. Norbert Job purchased the property on 6 June 1986 with a special warranty deed.

Historical Narrative:

The Cannon-Davis House was built for Frank Cannon between 1894 and 1900 on the south side of Mingusville in the Nolan Addition. The town was renamed Wibaux in 1895. Davis purchased the house on 30 August 1900 from Frank and Mary Ellen Cannon. At that time it was a two room, two story, frame house on the main street of Wibaux. Davis added three rooms and installed gas lights. In the fall of 1909, Davis added three more rooms to the house, installed running

water, a hot water heating system, electric lights, and a fireplace in the west wall of the dining room.

Biographical Information - Frank Cannon

Frank Cannon (1866-1927) was born in Carthage, Illinois. He moved to Colorado in 1880 and to Montana in 1886. He worked on the range for two years for Towers and Gudgell, cattle ranchers in northeastern Montana. In 1896 he opened a gents furnishing goods store in Wibaux with a stock of six hundred dollars. He operated this business for one year. The next year he and W.A. Orgain bought the Fountain Brothers general merchandise store.

Cannon sold his interest in the store to Orgain in 1897 and opened the Exchange Bank of Wibaux. He sold his interests in Wibaux in 1907 and moved the bank to Glendive. In 1909, he moved to Missoula to become president of the Missoula Bank and Trust Company. He returned to Wibaux and purchased a general merchandise store in 1914. A branch of the Exchange Bank was in the corner of his store. He also purchased the Pickering Hotel and renamed it the Milton Hotel in honor of his grandson, Milton Hood of Glendive. He sold the hotel to A.V. Cowee and moved to Glendive. He was living in Fairview at the time of his death.

Cannon married Julia May Davis in Carthage, Illinois in 1880. They had two children, Blake and Marge (son and daughter).

Biographical Information - Allison Davis

Allison Davis (1859-1915) was born in Hooperstown, Illinois. In 1875 Davis, his father William and brother William, moved to Texas and started farming and ranching. Davis helped trail a herd of longhorn cattle to eastern Montana about this time. He operated a ranch with his father until the later's death in 1883.

Davis sold his business interests in Texas and moved to Montana in 1885. He gained employment as a foreman with Frank Smith's Sheep Hook Ranch. Davis started his own ranch and obtained four thousand head of sheep from Smith. From the sale of wool, each received half of the income after expenses. Davis bought Smith's interest in three years. Davis bought 9,600 acres of land surrounding his ranch from the Northern Pacific Railroad in 1892 for one dollar per acre. This land was twenty-four miles south of the town of Wibaux. He sold this land in 1907 and acquired a 160 acre tract just south of his former ranch. At one time Davis could boast 15,000 sheep, 500 cattle, and 300 horses. His horse brand was an AD on the left hip.

Davis married Regina Mae Parker (1876-1910) on 1 January 1898 in Chicago, Illinois. They had three daughters: Esther Rachel, Alice May, and Marjorie Olive.

Davis had many business and political interests in Wibaux. He was one of seven men chosen by the community to represent them at the state capitol concerning the formation of Wibaux County. Wibaux County was formed from parts of Dawson, Fallon, and Richland Counties in 1914. Davis also appears to be responsible for construction of the telephone and light plant in Wibaux. He was president of the Electric Light Company, president of the Wibaux Telephone Company, and president of the Wibaux Improvement Company. Davis was also the first alderman for Ward Three and a member of the first Wibaux City Council. The city was incorporated in 1911. He was vice-president of the Farmer's Elevator Company in Wibaux. He constructed a grain elevator in Wibaux for five thousand dollars. Davis was also a vice-president of the Dennis Elevator Company, a vice-president and director of the First Bank of Wibaux, and a member of the school board of trustees. In late 1909, Davis purchased 160 acres from Henry Mullendore south of the grain elevators and east of Beaver Creek. He had the land surveyed and platted into lots of small acreages for development and sale as a housing subdivision of Wibaux. He called it the Davis Addition.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Information

1. Architectural Merit and Interest: The Cannon-Davis House is a representative example of vernacular, one-and-one-half-story houses built by farmers and ranchers on the plains of Montana. This type of house is commonly associated with the Homestead Era of the turn of the century. It is a simple balloon frame structure.

2. Condition of Fabric: Fair (to be demolished).

3. Summary Description: The Cannon-Davis House is a single one-and-one-half-story residential dwelling with an apartment. The general shape of the building is a cruciform. It is about 70 feet deep from the street and about 43 feet wide. It has a basement.

In general, the integrity of the Cannon/Davis House remains intact.

B. Detailed Description of Exterior

1. Foundation: The foundation is a combination of concrete-covered cut stone and concrete.

2. Wall Construction: The exterior walls are wooden two-by-four balloon framing with four-inch ship lap siding. They are currently painted an egg-yolk yellow color.

3. Structural Systems: The building is supported by a sawn wood frame covered with ship lap sheathing.

4. Porches, Stoops, Etc.: An open porch was added on and faces the street to the east. An enclosed porch was added on the south.

5. Openings, Doorways, and Windows: There are two windows and two doors in the east walls on the first floor. All but one of the first floor windows appear to be single-pane, double-hung and covered by a two-light storm window. Windows in the gables are leaded glass containing twenty-four-inch by four-inch panes. A picture window facing the street is topped by a leaded glass window. The two east doors are standard three-foot width by six-foot-eight inches high. They contain nearly door-length vertical oval lights. All other doors are two-feet-six inches wide and six-feet-eight inches in height. They contain a single square light in the top third of the door. There is one window in the gable of the east wall on the second floor. There are six windows on the first floor on the north wall and one window in the gable on the second floor. There is one window on the first floor on the west wall and one window on the second floor. There are two doors on the west walls. There are five windows on the south walls on the first floor. There are two windows in the gables on the second floor of the south walls. There is one door in the south wall.

6. Roof - Shape and Covering: The roof is a combination of gable, cross and gable, and offset, covered with wooden shingles painted green.

C. Detailed Description of Interior

1. Floor Plans: The original house appears to have been rectangular from west to east. It measured about 16 feet wide and 32 feet long. Rooms were added on to the north, south, and west. Another room was added on to the south, possibly in two phases. The dates of these additions are not known.

2. Stairways: An enclosed stairwell contains the stairway leading to the basement and second floor.

3. Flooring: The original flooring is one-and-one-half inch wide hardwood strips running east/west throughout the house. Some of the floors have been covered with carpet.

4. Wall and Ceiling Finishes: The interior is finished with lath and plaster on walls and ceiling. The ceilings are now covered with a suspended T-lock ceiling. The ceilings are eight-feet-four-inches high to the suspended ceiling; they are nine-feet-ten-inches to the original ceiling.

5. Doorways, Doors, and Windows: A distinctive feature separating the living room and dining room is double oaken doors. Each door has a width of three feet. They slide into the walls to the north and south when fully open.

6. Interior Trim: Fir trim is used around door and window frames. The capitals of the trim have been removed throughout the house.

7. Hardware: The original entrance doors remain on the east side of the house. They have been replaced elsewhere.

8. Mechanical and Electrical Equipment: The building uses hot water heat with individually controlled radiators in each room. It has an electric lighting system. No original fixtures remain. The lighting is incandescent bulbs from fixtures.

D. Site and Surroundings

1. Orientation and General Setting: The Cannon-Davis House faces east on Wibaux Street (Highway 7). On the north is the Wibaux County Courthouse; a modern building constructed in 1953. To the south is a burned out foundation. A vacant lot is across the street. A residential area lies to the south and west.

PART III. SOURCES OF PROJECT INFORMATION

Plans call for the demolition of the Cannon-Davis House in 1988. The historical documentation of the Cannon-Davis House was completed by Gar C. Wood & Associates, Inc., in July 1988. It is one portion of the historical/architectural recordation of the Cannon-Davis House prepared for the U.S. Postal Service that also includes photodocumentation and documentation of existing original drawings. The recordation conforms with the standards of the Historic American Buildings Survey, U.S. Department of the Interior.

Bibliography:

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Marcus, Wayne P. & Mrs. Joe Job

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Wood, Garvey C.

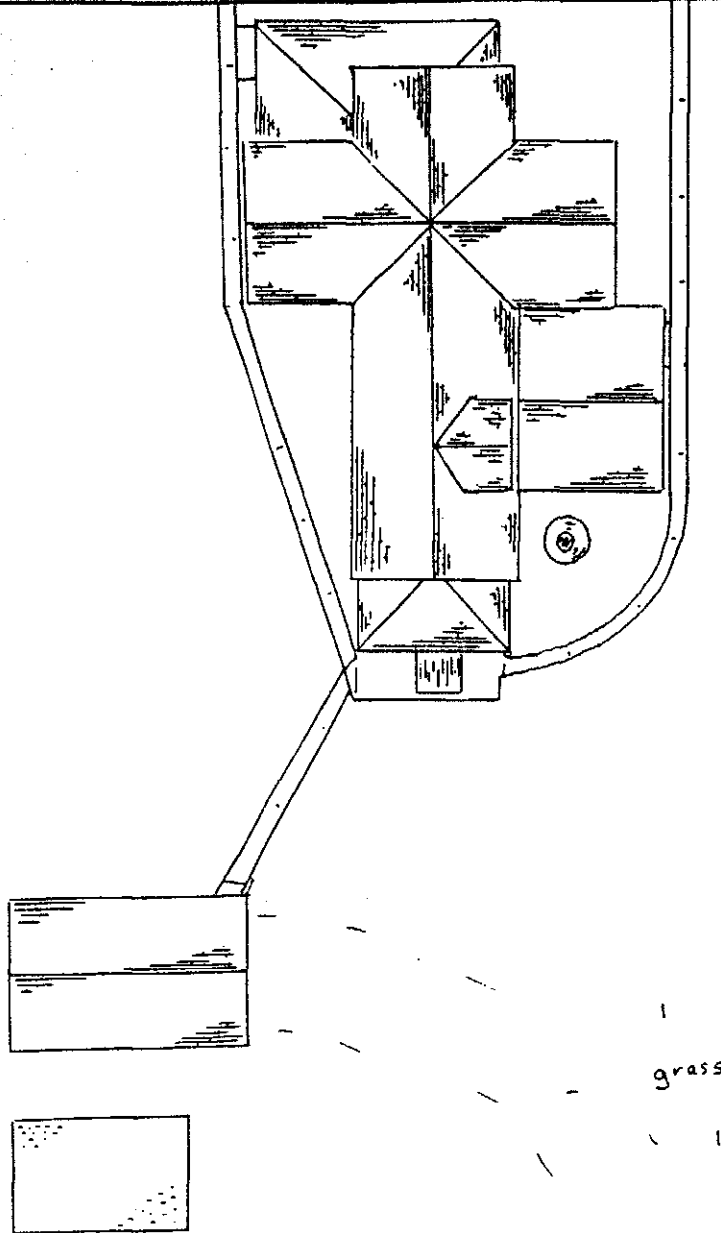
1987 Davis House. Montana Historical and Architectural
Inventory report on file in Montana State Archaeological
Site Files, Anthropology Department, University of
Montana, Missoula, Montana.

Highway No. 7

side walk

022

190



Davis House and outbuildings
Wibaux, Montana

10'

Figure 1: Lot plan of Davis House.

1/2 of Section 12
and lot boundary

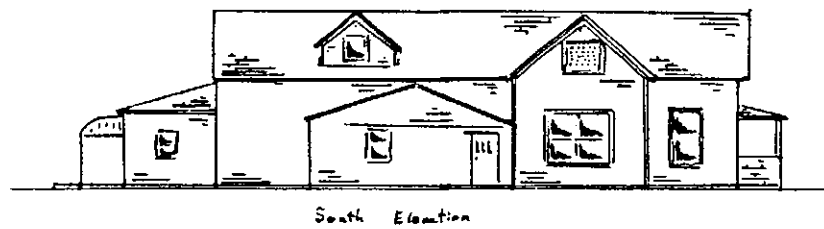
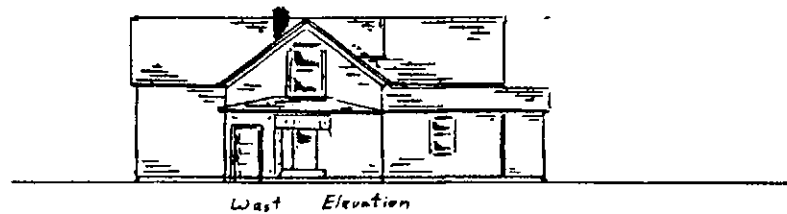
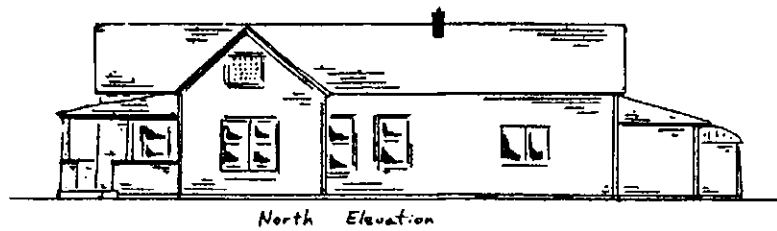


Figure 2: Elevation drawings of Davis House in October 1987.

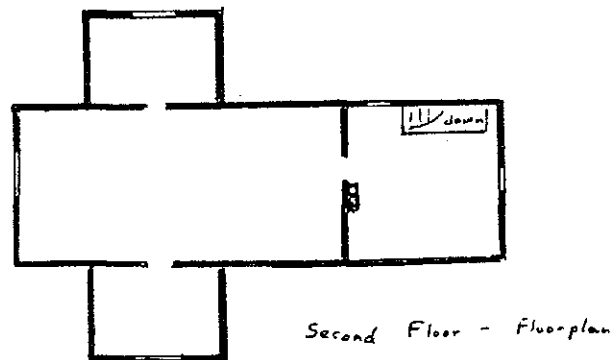
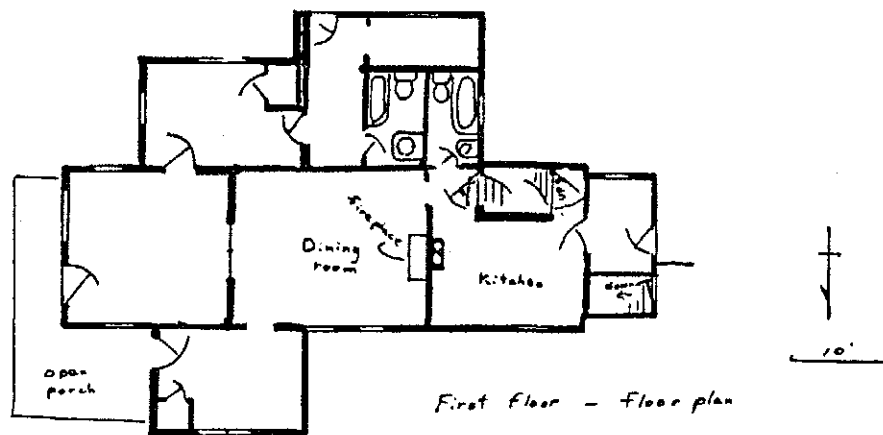


Figure 3: Floorplans of Davis House in October 1987.